



# CONGRESSMAN JOHN W. OLVER



## Special Report: *The Unacceptable Cost of the Iraq War*

### THE PRICE TO OUR NATION

#### Since the War in Iraq began in March 2003:

- Over 3,600 U.S. troops have been killed.
- Over 27,000 U.S. troops have been wounded.
- As many as 70,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed.
- Nearly two million Iraqis are refugees, and between 500,000 and one million have been internally displaced from their homes.
- The number of insurgents in Iraq has increased from a few thousand to tens of thousands.
- The number of daily attacks has hovered over 100 for the past year.
- The U.S. is now detaining over 20,000 insurgents.
- The U.S.'s standing and credibility abroad has plummeted,
- while the number of terrorists intent on killing Americans wherever and whenever they can has soared.
- **\$476.8 billion has been appropriated for the Iraq War so far.** This breaks down to over \$4,000 for every American household.
- The approximate amount of U.S. spending in Iraq each month is \$10 billion.
- The amount the Army needs to catch up on its backlog of equipment repairs generated from the Iraq War is over \$60 billion.
- The amount the Iraqi government says it needs to adequately rebuild the country's infrastructure is \$100 billion.
- ▲ If the War continues, it could eventually cost over \$1 trillion.

*The human cost of the Iraq War is far too high. The opportunity cost represented by the War's price tag is also too high. To see what I think we should be spending our tax dollars on **INSTEAD** of the War in Iraq, look inside . . .*



# WHAT WE SHOULD BE SPENDING

Instead of the

## Improvements in Homeland Security

- Advancements in traveler screening technology that will more effectively combat terrorist travel while upholding our nation's commitment to civil liberties.
- A well-run appeals system for travelers misidentified as threats by authorities.
- Rapid implementation of 100% screening of cargo on passenger aircraft.
- 100% scanning of incoming sea cargo at U.S. ports without disruption of commerce.
- Nuclear/radiation surveillance and detection at U.S. entry points.
- Bio-surveillance and a bio-defense system, including the maintenance of effective vaccine reserves, to protect against a biological attack.
- Enhanced security at chemical plants, power stations, large bridges, dams, and on mass transit systems.
- Interoperability of communications and sharing of electronic files between emergency responders.

## Help for Public Schools

- Better measures of student learning.
- Better recognition of the individual needs of students.
- Reduction of class sizes.
- More effective teacher training.
- Safer and drug-free schools.
- Repairing and rebuilding of schools that are falling apart.
- Full funding for the No Child Left Behind Act's help for students, teachers and schools (NCLB has been shortchanged by billions of dollars since its passage).

## Early Childhood Learning

- Funding for the Head Start program that is adequate to keep all such centers open and to reach all eligible at-risk children. (Because its funding has failed keep up with inflation, Head Start is facing shutdowns.)



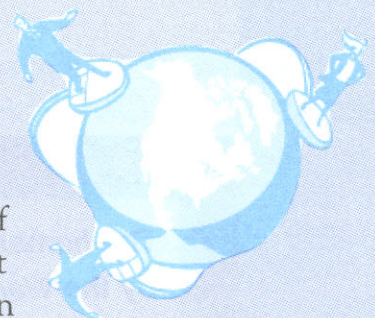
## Increases in College Aid

- Expansion on the legislative proposals moving through Congress right now to cut student loan rates and raise Pell grants. (The current proposals would be very useful, but more help is needed. Four-year college costs are \$50,000 - \$100,000 or more, and New England is the most expensive U.S. region.)



## Rural Access to Broadband Communications

- Development of adaptable, high-speed, high-capacity access to the internet in the 75% percent of our nation that is neither urban nor suburban.





# NG OUR PUBLIC DOLLARS ON

## e War in Iraq

### Investment in Public Housing

- Rehabilitation of distressed public housing.
- More rental assistance for needy families through housing voucher programs. (Only 25% of Americans eligible for housing assistance actually receive it.)
- Adequate housing for the elderly and disabled. (Typically, ten seniors are on the waiting list for any low-cost housing unit that becomes available. Rents for disabled Americans have risen in recent years by as much as 100% of their monthly income.)
- More housing counseling to reduce the skyrocketing number of foreclosures.



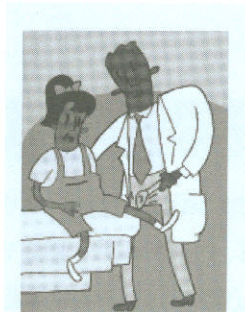
### Fixing the Medicare Prescription Drug Program

- Closure of the “doughnut hole” in Medicare Part D – i.e. coverage of prescription drug expenses between \$2,250 and \$5,100. (Millions of seniors with chronic diseases and disabilities fall into this current gap in coverage.)
  - Elimination or lessening of the program’s existing penalties.
  - More enrollment assistance for the seniors who want to sign up.



### Expansion of Children’s Health Care Coverage

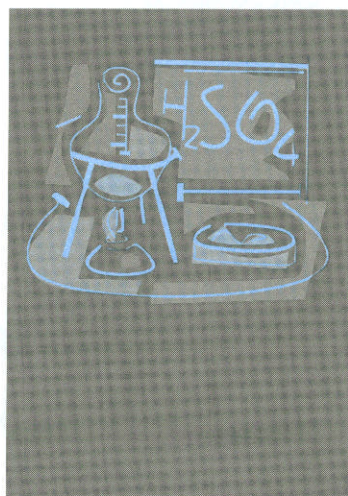
- Funding to close the shortfall in the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) so that all uninsured children can be covered. (About 9 million American children are currently uninsured.)



### Quality Health Care for Veterans and Active Military Personnel

- Upgraded facilities, better trained staff and new administrative safeguards to protect patients from neglect and lengthy bureaucratic delays.
- A VA/military system able to handle today’s mental health needs. (Treatment and rehabilitation for stress disorder and brain injury are inadequate.)
- Low co-payments and fees.
- Housing help for homeless veterans, who are the fastest-growing segment of our nation’s homeless population.

### Research to Cure Cancer and Other Diseases



- Increases in funding to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) adequate to keep pace with the rate of biomedical inflation. (There have been four years of flat funding that will eventually halt promising research.)

### Also . . .

- Help for cities to provide safe drinking water and clean waste water, investments to mitigate CO<sub>2</sub> production and the global climate change that all greenhouse gases cause, more and better transit options for commuters, as well as many, many other critical needs.



# Where We Should Go from Here

Further military offensives by the U.S. and permanent military bases maintained by the U.S. in Iraq will not solve anything.

The Iraqi government must decide whether it wants civil war or a unified Iraq built on political compromises. The current fighting and terrorist attacks will persist as long as we stay, and our casualties and expenditures will mount. Continuing to sacrifice American soldiers and America's future in Iraq is wrong. **We must safely disengage and bring our troops home.**

We should substitute a multi-faceted diplomatic effort to discourage Iraq's neighbors from engaging further in that country's civil warfare. We need to concentrate on securing the support of other nations in the region to keep the chaos in Iraq from spreading. Negotiations

must involve regional groups like the European Union and the Arab League, as well as all of Iraq's neighbors, without precondition.

We must also turn our attention to the situation in Afghanistan, which has been badly neglected during the Iraq War. In that country, there is:

- a resurgence of radicalism and violence;
- a breakdown of the border with Pakistan;
- an increase in poppy/opium production;
- rampant corruption;
- regional rule of warlords;
- too few police officers and teachers;
- scarce electricity and running water;
- chronic unemployment; and
- an infrastructure that has been reduced to ruins by years of fighting.

Our re-focus and national re-prioritization is long overdue.

**Sign up for my e-news updates at: [www.house.gov/olver](http://www.house.gov/olver)**



## **District Offices**

57 Suffolk Street, Suite 310  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
(413) 532-7010

78 Center Street  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
(413) 442-0946

463 Main Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420  
(978) 342-8722

## **Washington Office**

1111 Longworth HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-5335

*Congressman*  
**John W. Olver**

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

*Official Business*



M.C.  
PRSRT STD